

NEBRASKA ADOLESCENTS

The Results of the 2003
Youth Risk Behavior Survey of
Nebraska Public High School
Students (Grades 9-12)

NEBRASKA HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SYSTEM

Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2003 Highlights

Of the 2,933 Nebraska youth, grades 9-12, surveyed . . .

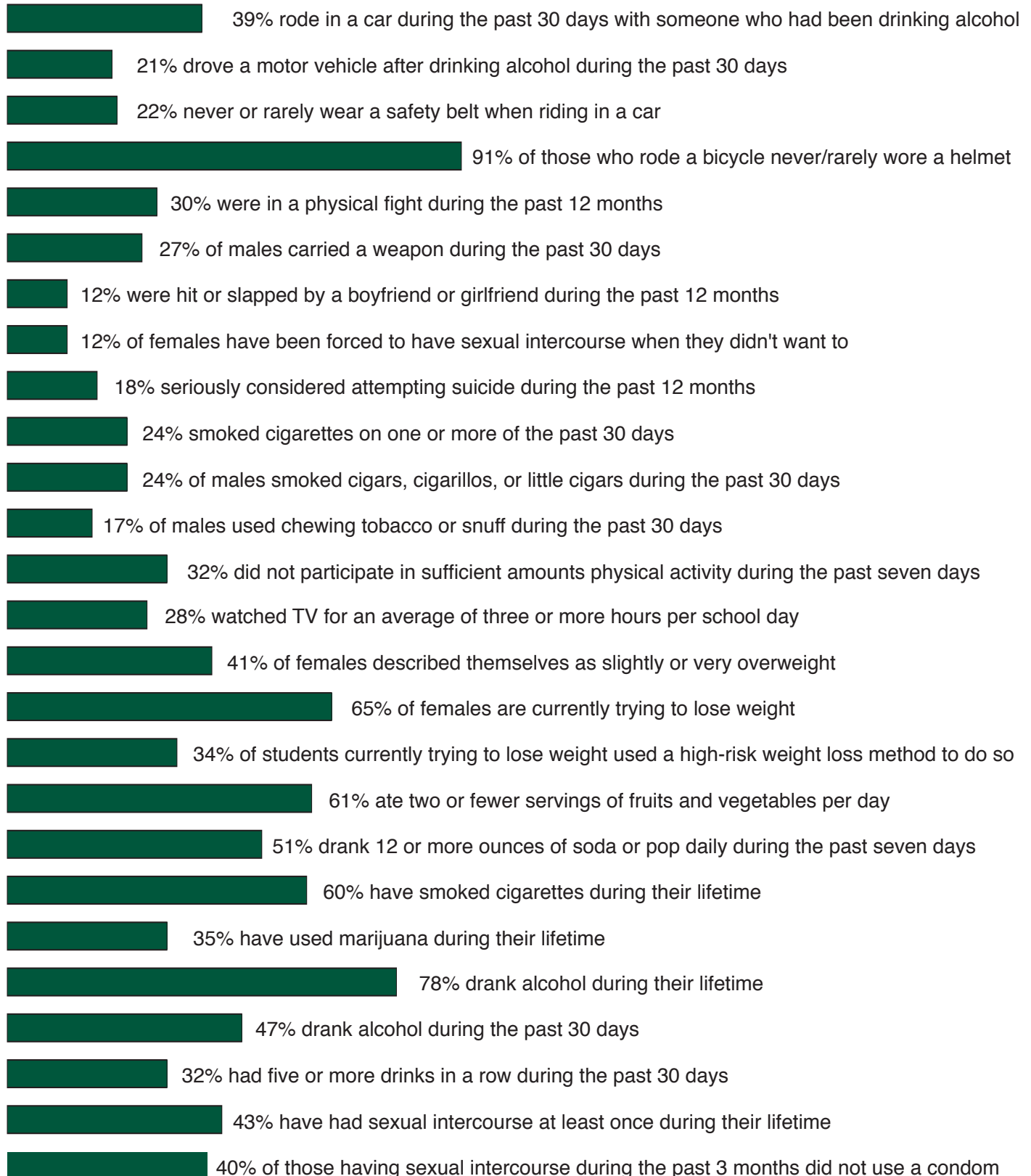


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Nebraska Adolescents: Their Risks of Illness, Disability and Premature Death

This report is one of a continuing series, prepared by the Nebraska Health and Human Services System (NHHSS), about Nebraska's adolescents and their health risks. It is based on the self-reported health behaviors of a random sample of 2,933 Nebraska youth, in grades 9–12, enrolled in a sample of public schools in the spring of 2003.

Background

To meet the nation's health goals for the year 2010, people need to behave in ways to reduce their personal health risks. For young people, reducing risky behaviors will reap lifelong benefits. This report provides data for planning programs to help young people reduce their health-related risks.

In 1990, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) initiated a program of national and state surveys to provide estimates of behaviors related to poor health, disability, and premature death among young people. These surveys are known as the Youth Risk Behavior Surveys (YRBS). The YRBS is part of the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, established by the CDC, and has been completed seven times in Nebraska: 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, and 2003.

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)

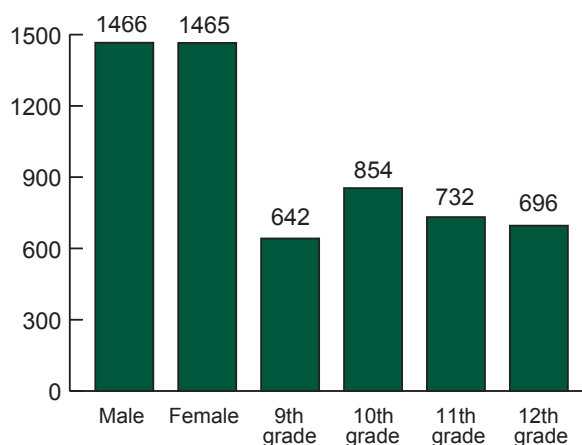
The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System was established and is managed by the Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH), National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at the CDC.

Priority health-risk behaviors are assessed in six areas:

- Behaviors that result in unintentional and intentional injuries
- Tobacco use
- Alcohol and other drug use
- Sexual behaviors that result in HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, and unintended pregnancies
- Dietary behaviors
- Physical activity

YRBS results are used by state and local health and education agencies to: 1) monitor progress toward the national health goals; 2) focus comprehensive school health education, teacher training, and instructional programs; 3) support comprehensive school health programs; and 4) encourage community and parental understanding of the health challenges faced by schools and their teachers.

Demographics of respondents in the 2003 Nebraska Youth Risk Behavior Survey*



*Totals may not equal 2,933 because not all students answered the gender or grade questions.

The Nebraska 2003 YRBS

In the spring of 2003, 56 schools with 9-12 grade students were randomly selected from all Nebraska public schools with students in these grades. Sixty-seven percent of these schools agreed to participate in the YRBS, with 93% of the students participating, resulting in an overall response rate of 63%. These survey results provide an important description of priority health risk behaviors. Statistically, the results are representative of all Nebraska public school students in grades 9-12.

Students completed a self-administered, anonymous, 96-item questionnaire. Survey procedures were designed to protect the privacy of students by allowing for anonymous and voluntary participation. Local parental permission procedures were followed before survey administration.

***A Letter From Richard A. Raymond, M.D., Director
Department of Health and Human Services Regulation and Licensure***

Dear Teachers, School Administrators and Health Professionals:

Choices made by young people can affect them throughout their lifetimes. These choices can also affect their friends, families, and communities. Unfortunately, the Nebraska YRBS shows that many choices young people make are not only risky, but adversely affect themselves and their communities.

YRBS results estimate the levels of risky behaviors among young people in six areas: intentional and unintentional injuries, tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behavior, nutrition, and exercise. These are the behaviors that cause or contribute to the greatest number of premature deaths and disabilities.

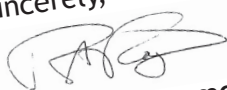
The results of past surveys have been used to plan public health and education programs, to generate public support for health promotion initiatives, and to help community leaders and parents develop local and personal ways to assist young people.

Over time these results and others suggest the differences between boys and girls in the rates of risky behaviors is decreasing, as are the differences between young people in rural and urban communities.

- Tobacco continues to be the principal cause of premature death in our society.
- Young people are overrepresented in the number of traffic crashes and the injuries and deaths that result. Too many drink. Too many drink and drive. Too many ride with drivers who have been drinking, including adults. Too many fail to use their safety belts.
- An unacceptable proportion of young people are sexually active. Sexual activity increases the risks of an undesired pregnancy and/or sexually transmitted diseases.
- Too many young people are overweight, are not physically active and spend too much time watching TV.
- Too few parents and communities support the involvement of their young people in physical education classes and other healthy non-competitive physical activities.

I urge all Nebraskans to review this report and become involved in local community efforts to help young people reduce their risky health-related behaviors.

Sincerely,

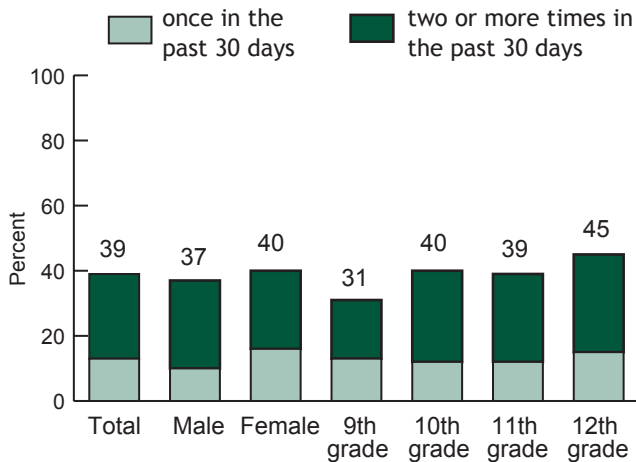


Richard A. Raymond, M.D., Director
Department of Health and Human Services
Regulation and Licensure

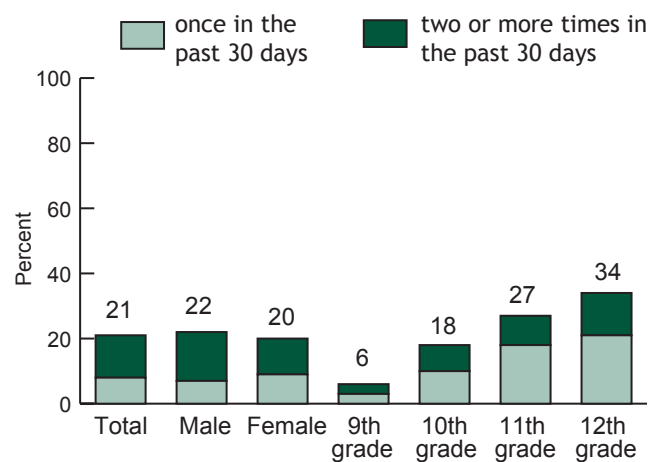
Alcohol and Motor Vehicle Crashes ...

- ◆ *In 2002, Nebraska drivers age 15 to 24 had the highest percentage involvement of all age groups in all crashes (34.8%), and fatal crashes (28.7%).¹*
- ◆ *Nationally, alcohol and other drug use is a factor in approximately 40% of deaths from motor vehicle crashes among youth under the age of 24.²*

Percentage of students who rode in a vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol



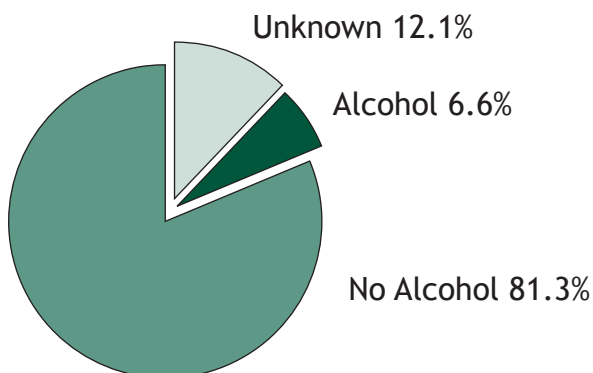
Percentage of students who drove a car or other vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol



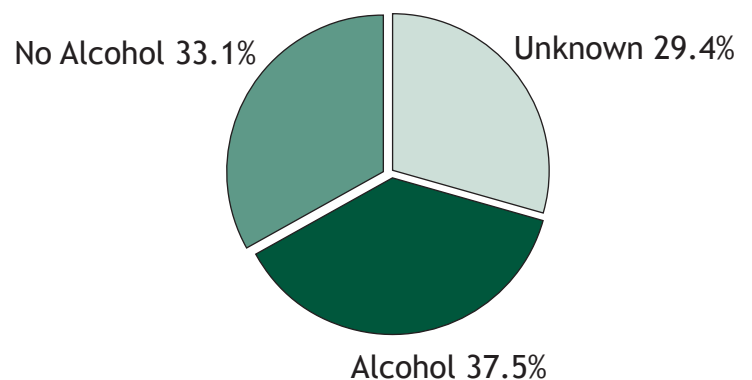
Alcohol as a Risk Factor in Traffic Accidents

As crash severity increases, so does the likelihood of alcohol involvement. In 2002, in Nebraska's general population, 6.6% of injury crashes involved alcohol and 37.5% of fatal crashes involved alcohol. Nearly 35% of the total injury crashes involved drivers age 15-25, as did 29% of the fatal crashes.¹

Injury Crashes



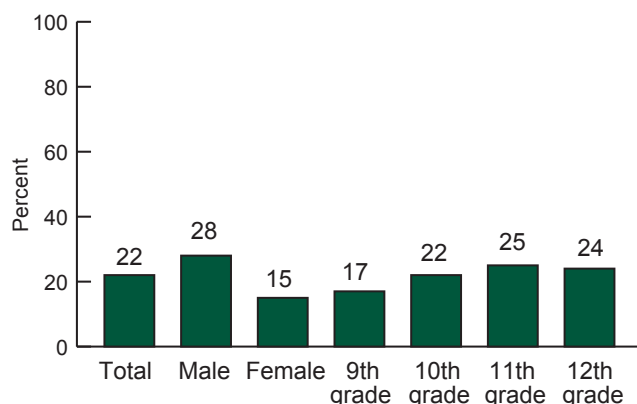
Fatal Crashes



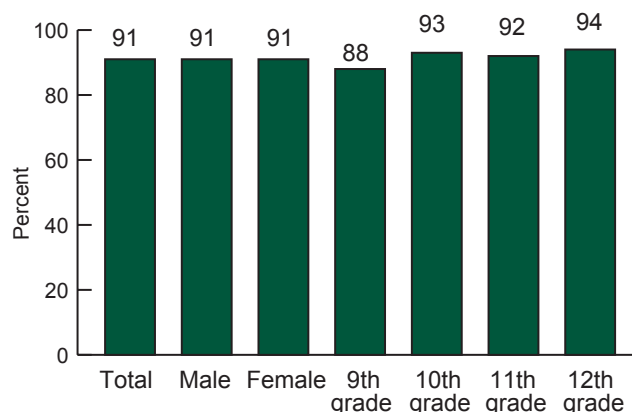
Unintentional Injuries ...

- ◆ *Injury and violence are the leading causes of death among Nebraska youth age 5-19—motor vehicle crashes (32% of all deaths), all other unintentional injuries (14%), homicide (11%), and suicide (9%).¹*
- ◆ *Head injuries are the leading cause of death in motorcycle and bicycle crashes.³ Unhelmeted motorcyclists are twice as likely to receive a fatal head injury and three times as likely to receive a nonfatal head injury as are helmeted riders.⁴*

Percentage of students who never or rarely wear a seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else



Among students who rode a bicycle during the past 12 months, the percentage who never or rarely wore a helmet

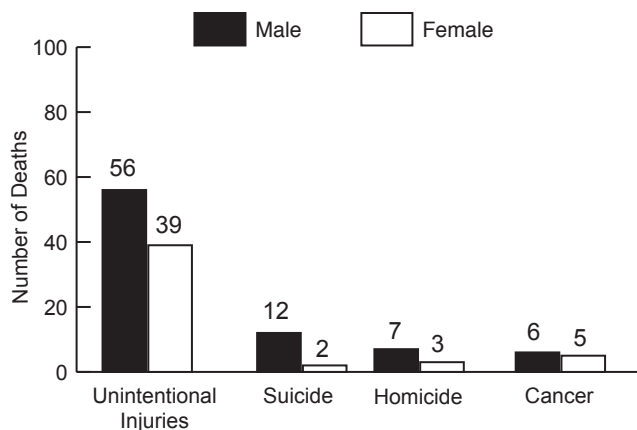


The single most effective way to reduce deaths and injuries from motor vehicle crashes is to wear seat belts at all times when riding in or driving a vehicle.

Deaths Among 1-19 Year Olds

Statistics on the leading causes of death are not kept by grade in a way that corresponds to the information in the other tables in this report. The Nebraska Health and Human Services System (NHHSS) reports deaths for children and young people age 1-19.

(Source: NHHSS 2002 Vital Statistics Report)



How We Compare: Nebraska and the USA

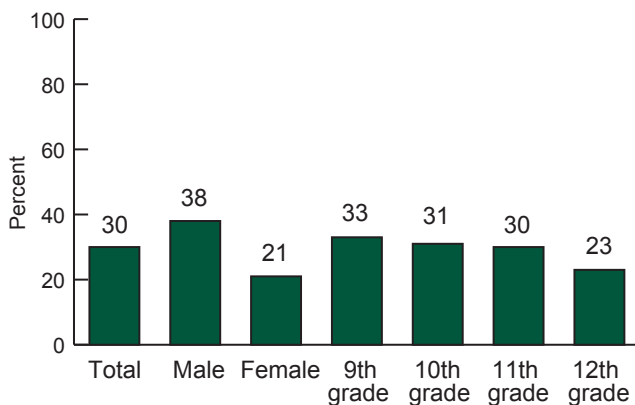
	Nebraska	USA
Rode with a drinking driver during the past 30 days	39%	30%
Drove after drinking alcohol during the past 30 days	21%	12%
Never or rarely wore a seat belt when riding in a car	22%	18%

Violence ...

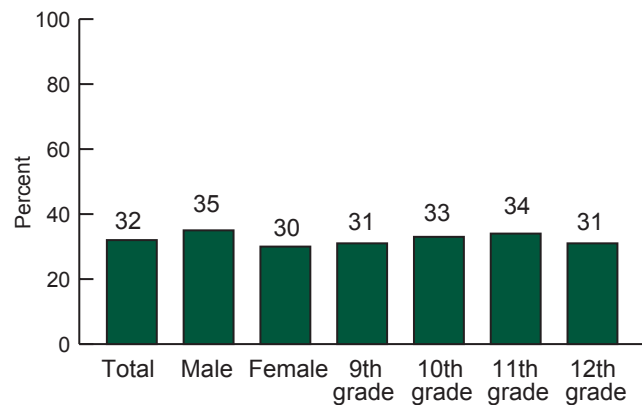
- ◆ *Violence is the second leading cause of death among Americans age 15-34.⁵*
- ◆ *Almost one third of Nebraska high school students were involved in a physical fight in the past 12 months.*

Physical Fights and Vandalism

Percentage of students who were involved in a physical fight during the past 12 months



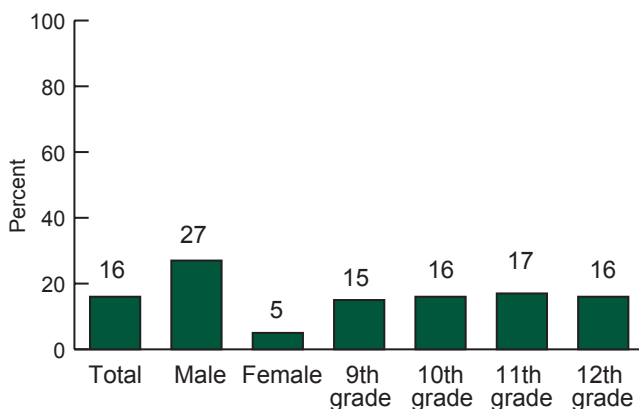
Percentage of students who have had property, such as their car, clothing, or books stolen or damaged on school property during the past 12 months



Weapons and High School Students

Adolescent homicides are more common in the U.S. than in any other developed country in the world.⁶ About nine out of every ten homicide victims are killed by a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club.⁷

Percentage of students who carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on one or more of the past 30 days



How We Compare: Nebraska and the USA

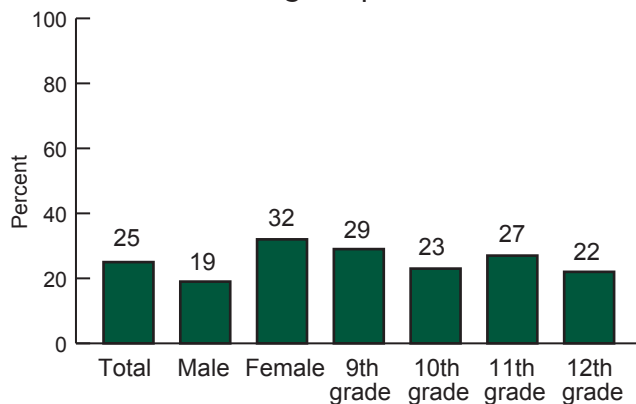
	Nebraska	USA
In a fight during the past 12 months	30%	33%
Personal property vandalized at school during past 12 mo.	32%	30%
Carried a weapon in the past 30 days	16%	17%

- ◆ *There are three types of violence: 1) violence against another person such as fights, assaults, and murder; 2) violence against oneself—suicide; and 3) violence against property, as in vandalism.*
- ◆ *One quarter of Nebraska high school students felt so sad or hopeless for at least two weeks that they stopped carrying out some usual activity.*

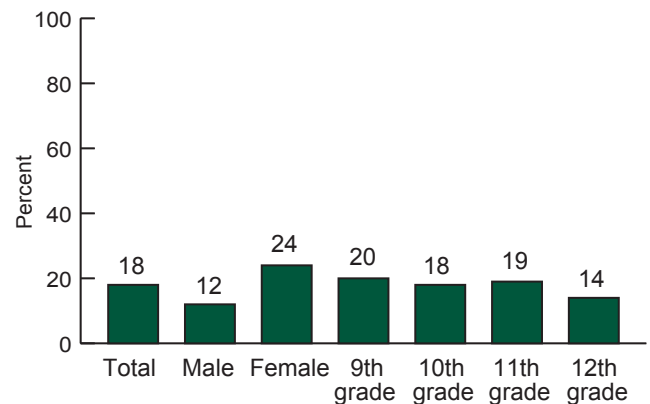
Suicide is violence against oneself . . .

Percentage of students who . . .

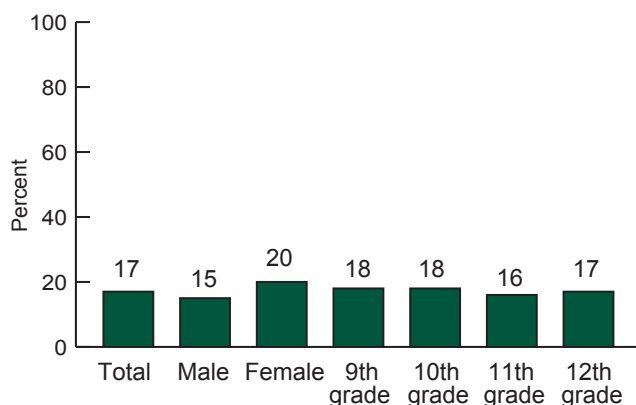
Felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities during the past 12 months



Seriously considered attempting suicide during the past 12 months



Made a plan about how they would attempt suicide during the past 12 months



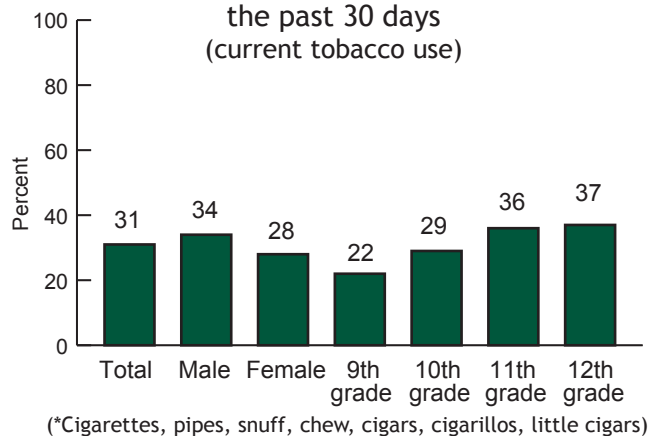
How We Compare: Nebraska and the USA

	Nebraska	USA
Felt so sad or hopeless it prevented a usual activity	25%	29%
Seriously considered attempting suicide during the past 12 months	18%	17%
Made a suicide plan during the past 12 months	17%	17%

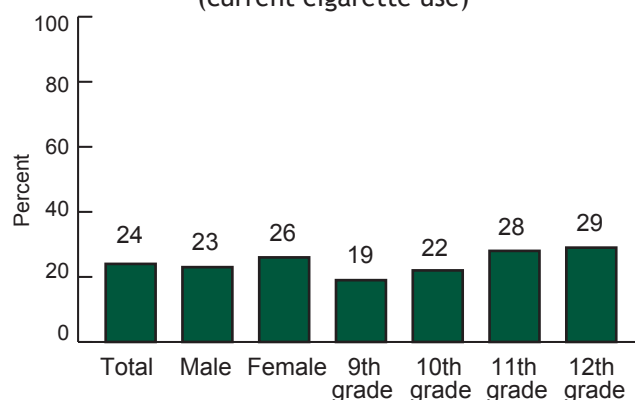
Tobacco—It Kills The Most People ...

- ◆ *One third of Nebraska high school students used some form of tobacco in the last 30 days.*
- ◆ *All tobacco products, including chew; cigars; and cigarettes, damage health.*

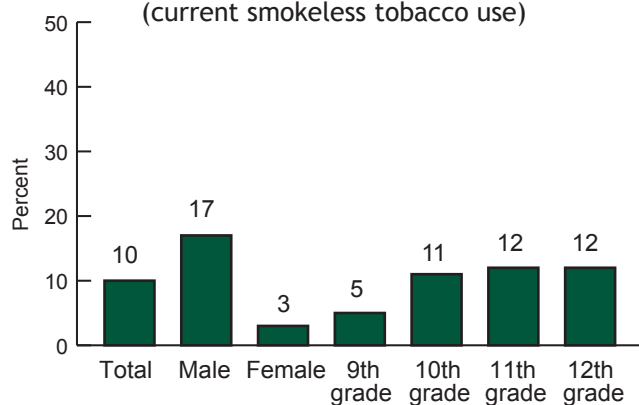
Percentage of students who used any form of tobacco* one or more times during the past 30 days (current tobacco use)



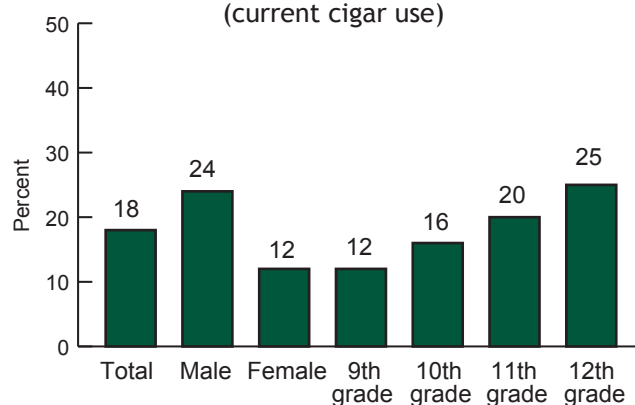
Percentage of students who smoked cigarettes one or more times during the past 30 days (current cigarette use)



Percentage of students who used chewing tobacco or snuff on one or more of the past 30 days (current smokeless tobacco use)

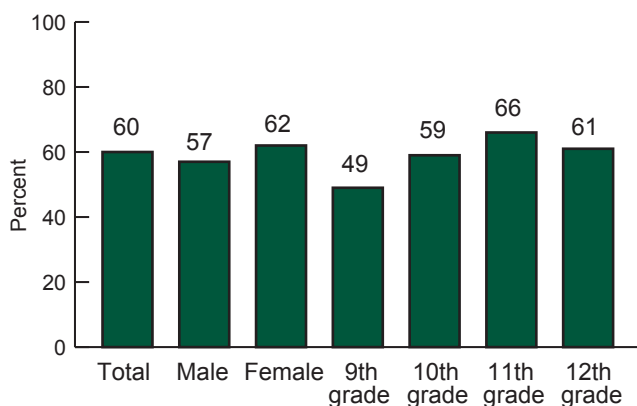


Percentage of students who smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars on one or more of the past 30 days (current cigar use)



- ◆ *Two-thirds of Nebraska high school smokers have tried to quit at least once in the past 12 months.*
- ◆ *The percentage of high school cigarette smokers was lower in 2003 than at any other time in the decade. In the same year, Nebraska dramatically reduced funding for its comprehensive statewide tobacco control program.*

Percentage of students who were current smokers and tried to quit smoking at least once during the past 12 months

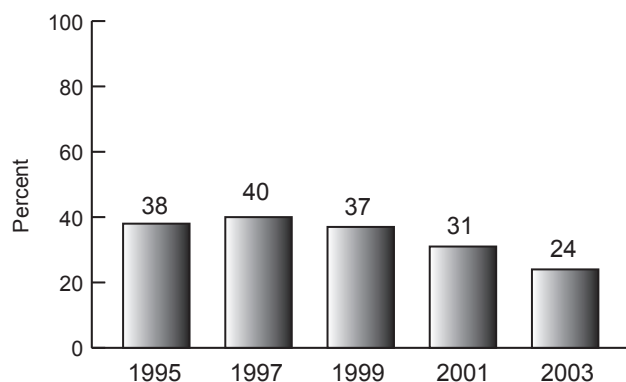


How Smokers Usually Get Their Cigarettes . . .

<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	
27%	14%	Purchase
24%	31%	Borrow
38%	48%	Get someone else to buy
4%	2%	Steal
6%	5%	Another way

Great Progress in Tobacco Trends...

Percentage of students who smoked cigarettes at least once in the past 30 days



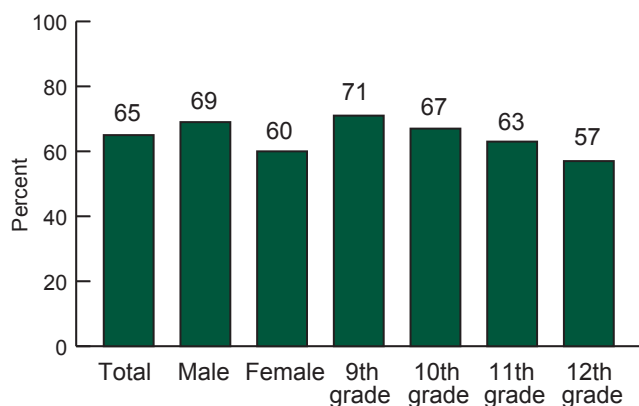
How We Compare: Nebraska and the USA

	Nebraska	USA
Smoked in the past 30 days	24%	22%
Chewed in the past 30 days	10%	7%
Used any form of tobacco in the past 30 days	31%	28%
Tried to quit smoking in the past 12 months	60%	54%

Physical Activity ...

- ◆ *Physical activity has numerous health benefits including less disease; healthier bones, muscles, and joints; better weight control; and less anxiety and depression... yet participation in sufficient physical activity (in all its forms) is particularly low for Nebraska high school students.*
- ◆ *Between 1991 and 2003, sufficient vigorous physical activity declined 7% among Nebraska high school students, while regular sports team participation declined 15% from 1993 to 2003.*

Percentage of students who participated in vigorous physical activities for at least 20 minutes on three or more of the past seven days



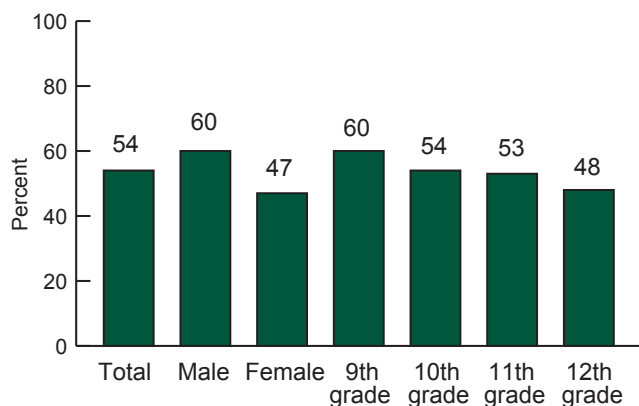
How Much Is Enough?

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) recommends that adolescents at the high school level engage in 225 minutes of physical activity per week (including a mixture of structured and unstructured vigorous and moderate physical activity) and attend weekly physical education that provides exercises that improve strength and flexibility at least three times per week.

- ❖ **Only 1 in every 5 Nebraska high school students (19%) engages in sufficient physical activity.**

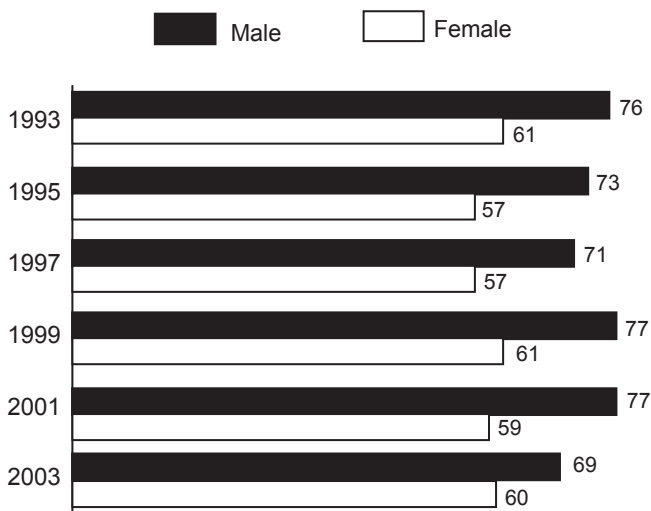
(Indicating that they engaged in sufficient vigorous activity, sufficient moderate activity, and regular strengthening exercises during the past seven days.)

Percentage of students who did exercises to strengthen or tone their muscles on three or more of the past seven days



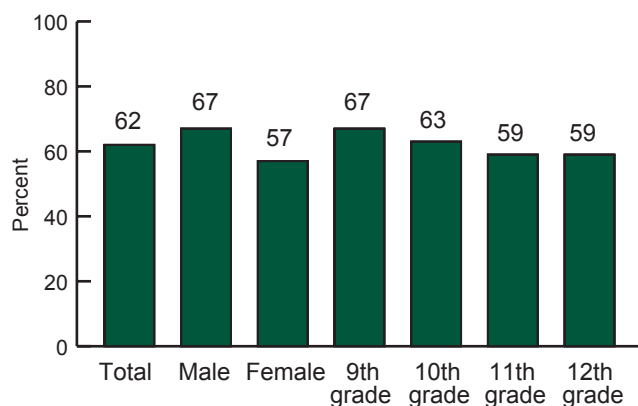
Exercise Trends ...

Percentage of students who participated in vigorous physical activities for at least 20 minutes on three or more of the past seven days

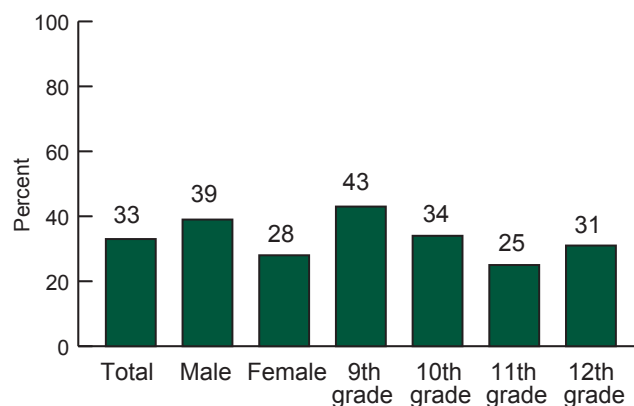


- ◆ *In Nebraska, 28% of boys and 36% of girls in grades 9-12 participated in insufficient levels of physical activity (e.g., did not participate in at least 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity on 3 or more of the past 7 days and did not participate in at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on 5 or more of the past 7 days).*
- ◆ *In Nebraska, 8% of the boys and 10% of the girls are physically inactive (e.g., did not participate in any moderate or vigorous physical activity during the past 7 days).*

Percentage of students who played on one or more sports teams during the past 12 months

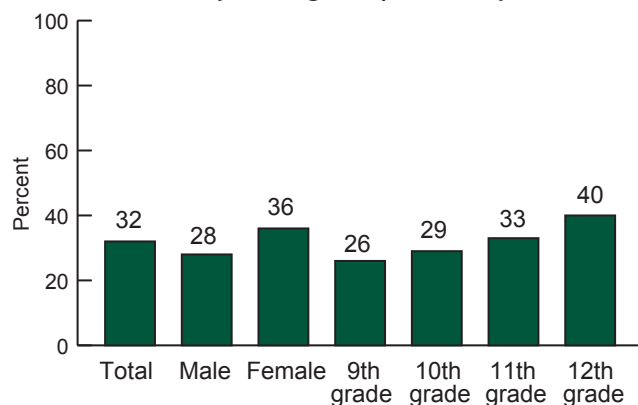


Percentage of students who attend PE class daily and exercise for more than 20 minutes during an average PE class (Quality daily PE)



Insufficient Physical Activity

Percentage of students who did not participate in sufficient amounts of moderate or vigorous physical activity during the past 7 days



How We Compare: Nebraska and the USA

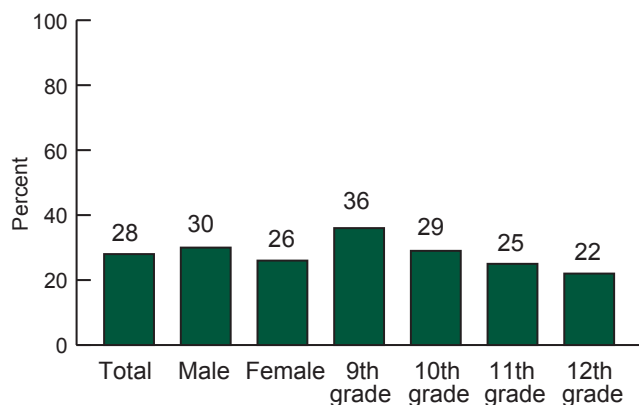
	Nebraska	USA
Attended physical education classes daily	33%	28%
Played on one or more sports teams during the past 12 months	62%	58%
Participated in vigorous physical activity on at least 3 of the past 7 days	65%	62%
Watched three or more hours of TV per day on an average school day	28%	38%

Physical Activity ...

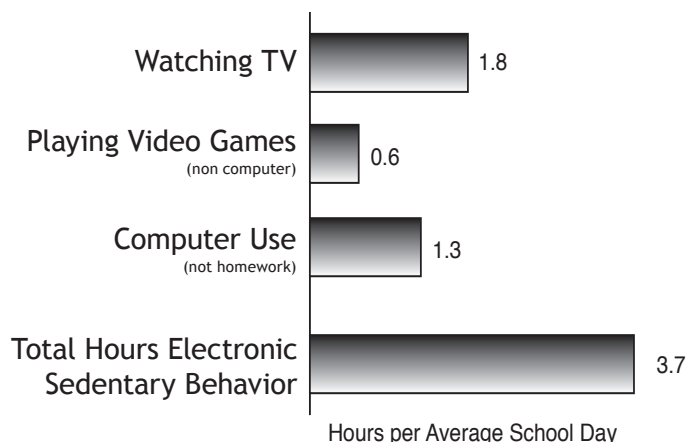
- ◆ *On average, Nebraska high school students spend more than 3 hours watching television, playing video games, or using the computer (excluding homework) during an average school day (electronic sedentary behavior [ESB]).*
- ◆ *3 in every 4 students (75%) spends two or more hours engaging in ESB during an average school day. More than 1 in every 4 (27%) spends 5 or more hours daily.*

TV—The Other Exercise

Percentage of students who watched three or more hours of TV on an average school day



Hours Spent On Electronic Sedentary Behaviors (ESB) During an Average School Day



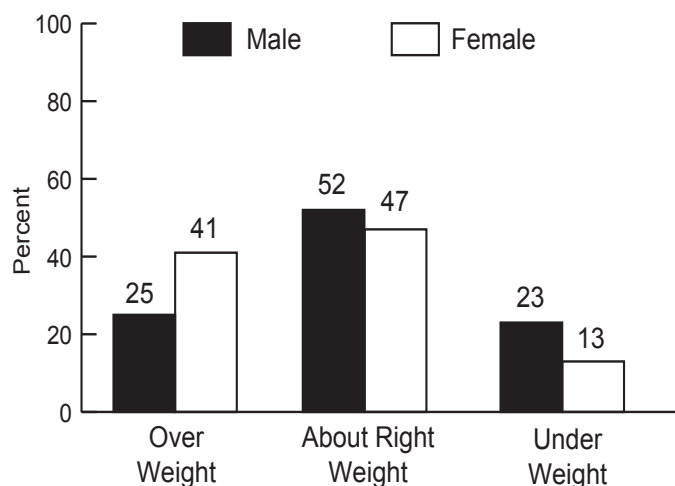
Playing For Fun

Not long ago kids played outdoors—just for the fun of it. Today, between time spent on video games and competitive sports teams, "just for fun" pick-up games of basketball, baseball, soccer, and the like, are becoming a thing of the past. As a result, unless it's an organized team sport, high school students typically do not participate in physical activities. The older a student gets, the opportunities to participate on a sports team decrease. The challenge is to promote physical activity as a fun and healthy lifestyle, rather than limiting a student's physical activity level to whether or not they are part of a sports team.

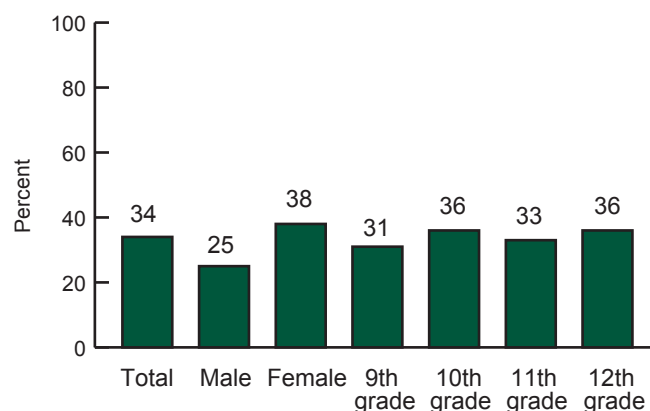
Overweight, Dieting, and Eating Disorders ...

- ◆ *Two-thirds of Nebraska high school females (65%) are currently trying to lose weight while 31% of the males are trying to gain weight.*
- ◆ *Among Nebraska students that are trying to lose weight, one-third (34%) are using one or more high-risk weight loss methods to lose weight.*

How Students Describe Their Weight

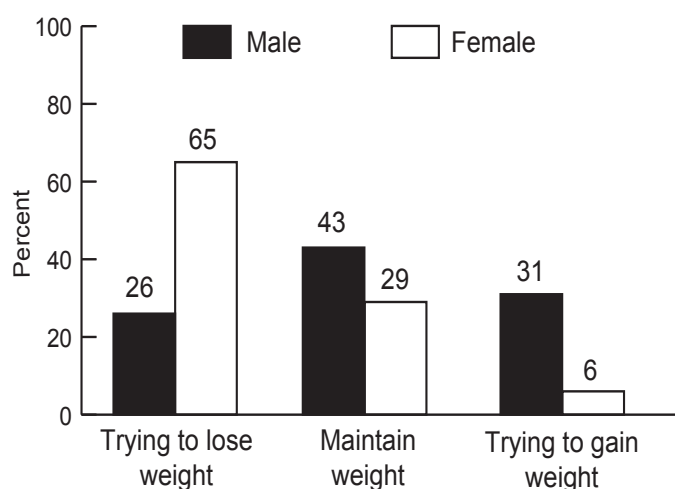


Among students that are currently trying to lose weight, percentage that use one or more high-risk weight loss methods* to lose weight



*Fasted for 24 hours or more, took diet pills or supplements without a doctor's advice, vomited, or used laxatives during the past 30 days.

What Students Are Doing About Their Weight



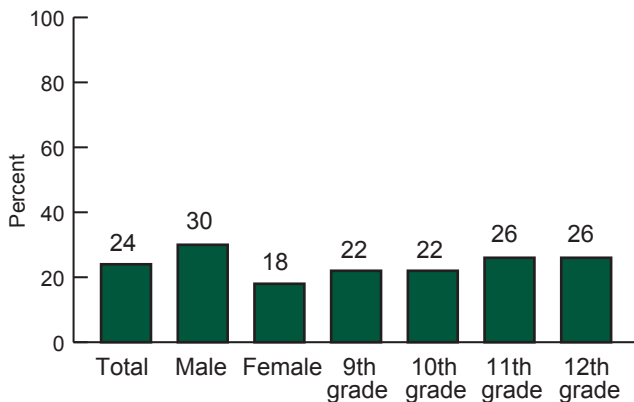
Methods used to lose weight during the past 30 days among students who are trying to lose weight

Method	Males	Females
Exercise	89%	87%
Eat less food, fewer calories, low-fat food	65%	80%
Go without eating for 24 or more hours	16%	27%
Take diet pills, powders, or liquids without doctor's advice	12%	16%
Vomit or take laxatives	6%	12%

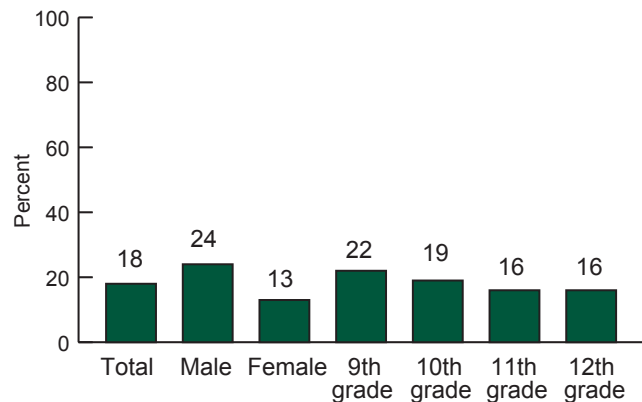
Nutrition ...

- ◆ *The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends limiting beverages that are high in added sugar; yet half of Nebraska high school students drink 12 or more ounces of soda per day, while nearly one quarter drink 32 or more ounces per day.*
- ◆ *A growing body of research suggests that dairy products may play an important role in weight management; yet less than 1 in every 5 students consumes milk regularly (an average of three or more glasses per day).*

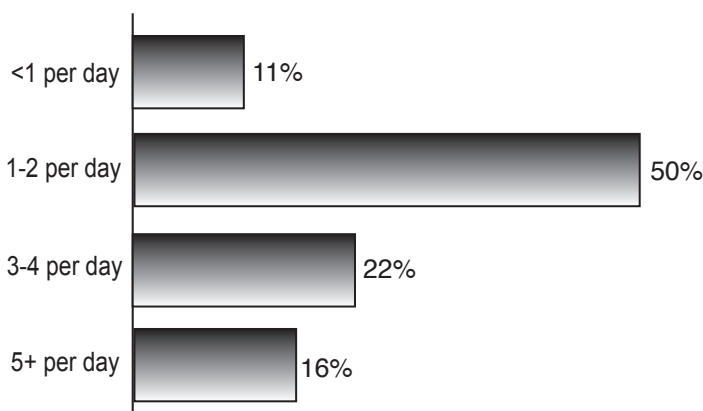
Percentage of students who drank 32 or more ounces of soda **per day** during the past seven days



Percentage of students who drank three or more glasses of milk **per day** during the past seven days (regular milk consumption)



Daily Servings of Fruits and Vegetables Among Nebraska High School Students*



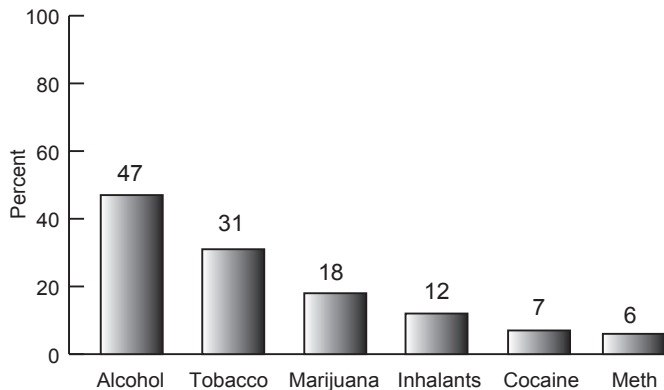
*Average number of times per day that fruits and vegetables were eaten during the past 7 days

- ◆ Male students are nearly twice as likely as female students to consume milk regularly. This is particularly concerning since dairy products are important for maximizing bone growth and protecting against future risk of osteoporosis in adolescent females.
- ◆ 3 in every 5 students (61%) ate two or fewer servings of fruits and vegetables per day, far below the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) recommendation of 5-a-day.
- ◆ High school students nationally are 35% more likely than high school students in Nebraska to consume 5-a-day.

Drug Use ...

- ◆ *Alcohol and tobacco continue to be the drugs of choice of Nebraska's high school students.*
- ◆ *Young people who use cocaine or meth usually began with tobacco and alcohol.*

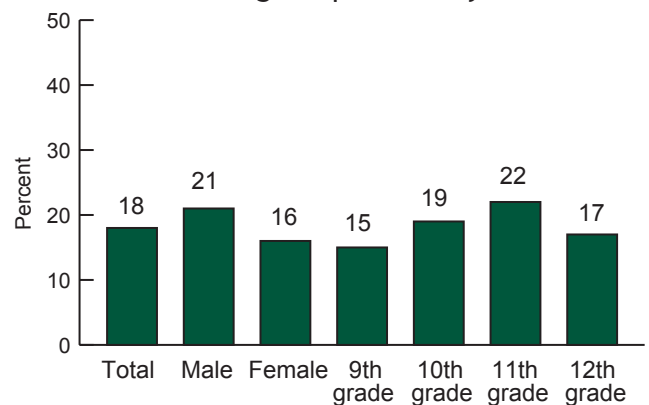
Percentage of students using ...*



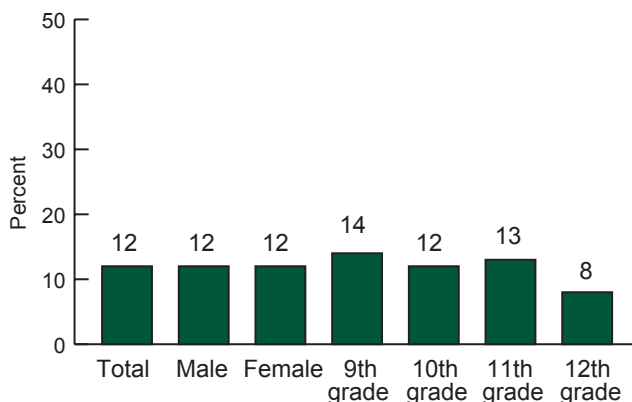
*Data for alcohol, tobacco and marijuana usage represents the percentage of students who used a substance at least once in the past 30 days. Inhalants, cocaine, and meth use percentages represent lifetime use.

Inhalants included glue, the contents of aerosol cans, paints, sprays, and motor fuels that are inhaled. Cocaine included powder, crack and freebase. Meth refers to methamphetamines (also called speed, crystal, crank, or ice).

Percentage of students who used marijuana one or more times during the past 30 days



Percentage of students who sniffed glue, breathed the contents of aerosol spray cans, or inhaled any paints or sprays to get high one or more times during their life



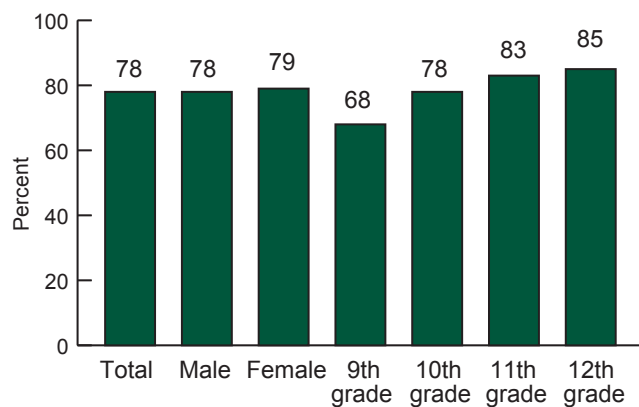
How We Compare: Nebraska and the USA

	Nebraska	USA
Alcohol use in last 30 days	47%	45%
Tobacco use in last 30 days	31%	28%
Marijuana use in last 30 days	18%	22%
Inhalant use	12%	12%

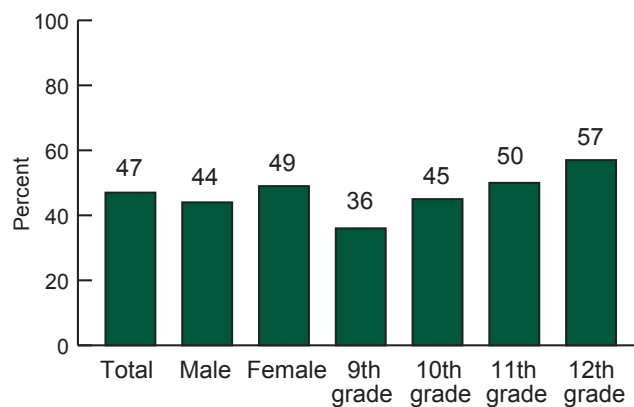
Alcohol—The Drug That Kills Adolescents Most Often

- ◆ *Nationwide, the total cost of alcohol use by youth—including traffic crashes, violent crime, burns, drowning, suicide attempts, fetal alcohol syndrome, alcohol poisonings and treatment—is more than \$58 billion per year.⁸*
- ◆ *People who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcoholism than those who begin at age 21.⁹*

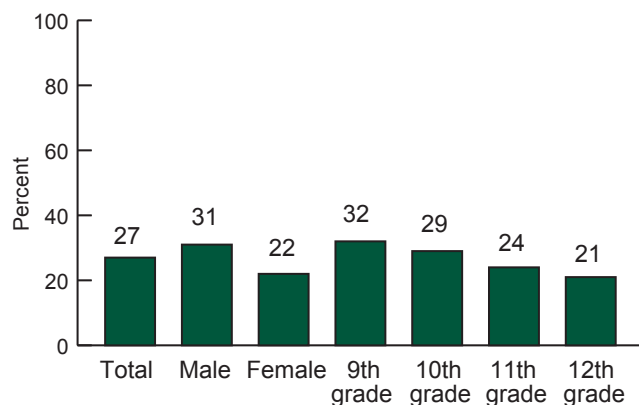
Percentage of students who have had at least one drink of alcohol during their lifetime (lifetime alcohol use)



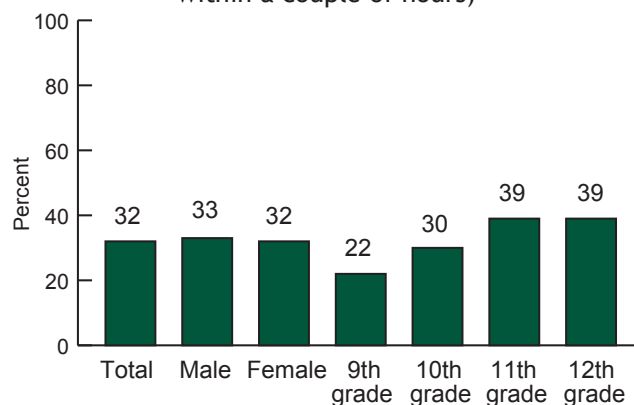
Percentage of students who have had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more of the past 30 days (current alcohol use)



Percentage of students who had their first drink of alcohol, other than a few sips, before the age of 13



Percentage of students who engaged in episodic heavy drinking during the past 30 days (Five plus drinks in a row within a couple of hours)



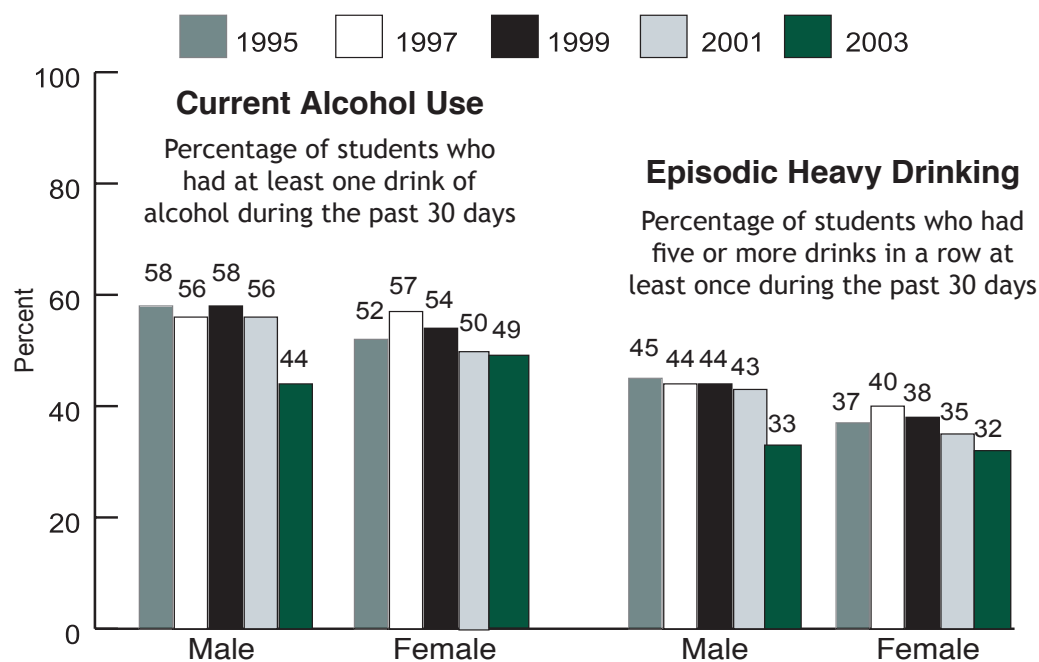
- ◆ *Lifetime alcohol dependence declined from more than 40% among individuals who started drinking at age 14 years or younger, to about 10% among those who started drinking at age 20 years or older.¹⁰*
- ◆ *Eighty percent of teenagers do not know that a 12 oz. can of beer has the same amount of alcohol as a shot of whiskey; similarly, 55% do not know that a 5 oz. glass of wine and a 12 oz. can of beer have the same amount of alcohol.¹¹*

Alcohol Use Contributes To Many Health Problems

Alcohol & Auto Crashes see page 4

Alcohol & Other Drugssee page 15

What's Happening Over Time?



In 2002, drivers between the ages of 15 and 20 were in 21% of all alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes, despite the fact that Nebraska's legal drinking age is 21.¹

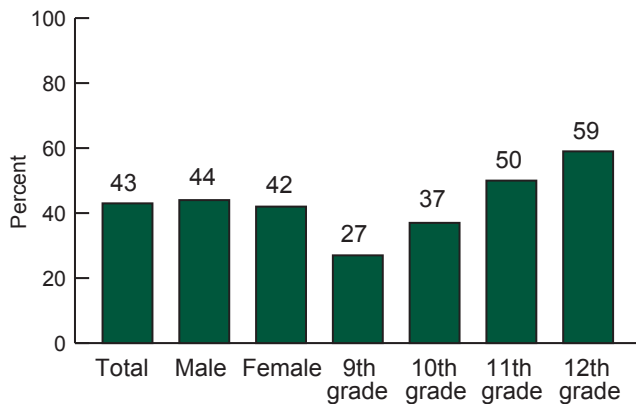
How We Compare: Nebraska and the USA

	Nebraska	USA
Drank alcohol during the past 30 days	47%	45%
Drank five or more drinks in a row during the past 30 days	32%	28%
First drink of alcohol before age 13	27%	28%

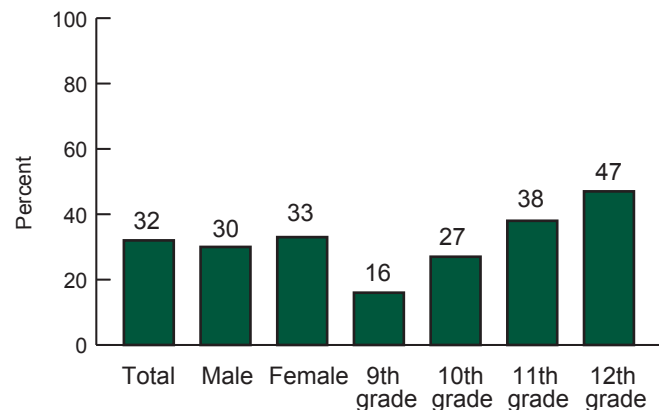
Sexual Behavior and HIV/AIDS ...

- ◆ *Pregnancies that occur during adolescence place both mothers and infants at risk for lifelong social and economic disadvantages.¹²*
- ◆ *Every year nearly one quarter of all new HIV infections, one quarter of infectious new sexually transmitted diseases, and nearly one million pregnancies occur among our nation's teenagers.¹³*

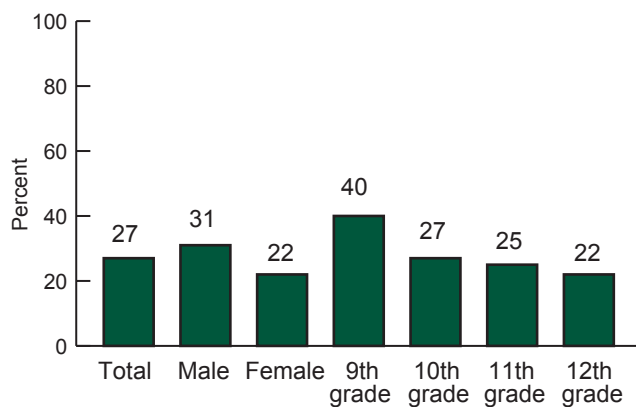
Percentage of students who ever had sexual intercourse



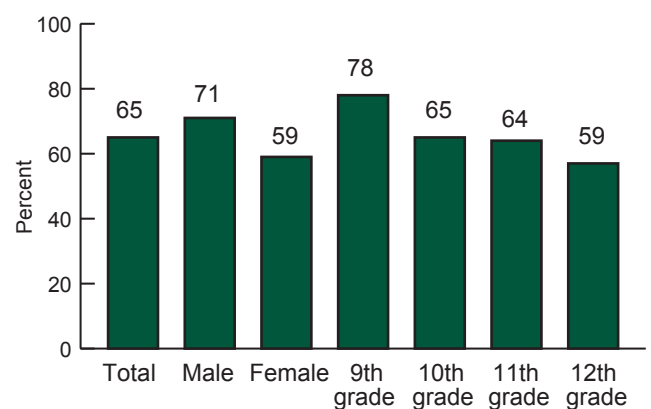
Percentage of students who had sexual intercourse during the past three months (currently sexually active)



Percentage of students who have ever had sexual intercourse, but have not had sexual intercourse during the past three months

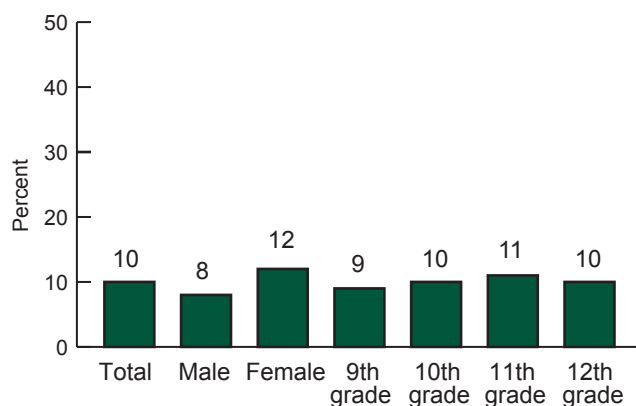


Of students who ever had sexual intercourse, the percentage who used a condom the last time they had sexual intercourse

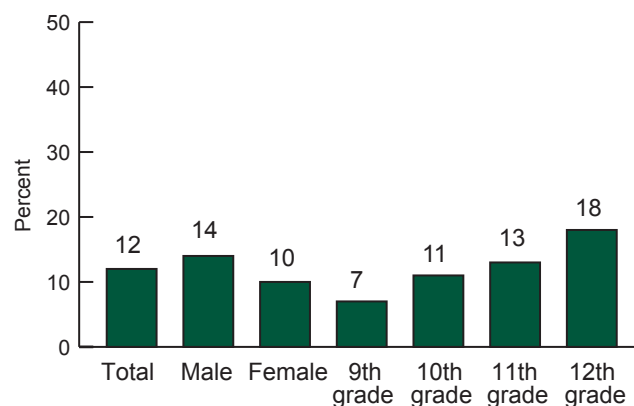


- ◆ *Constant, correct use of latex condoms by males is highly effective at reducing the risk of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).¹⁴*
- ◆ *HIV and AIDS are currently impacting female adolescents at equal or greater rates than male adolescents.¹⁵*
- ◆ *Between 1983 and 2001, there were 1,166 AIDS cases in Nebraska; of these, 641 have died.¹⁶*

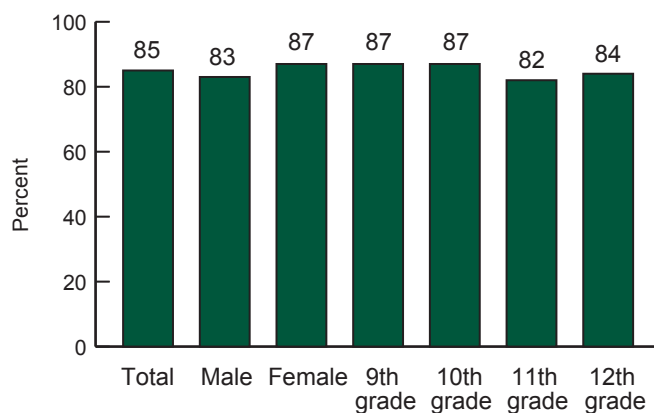
Percentage of students who have ever been physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to



Percentage of students who have had sexual intercourse with four or more people during their lifetime



Percentage of students who have ever been taught about AIDS or HIV infection in school



How We Compare: Nebraska and the USA

	Nebraska	USA
Ever had sexual intercourse	43%	47%
Had sexual intercourse during the past 3 months	32%	34%
Of students who had sexual intercourse during past 3 mo., percentage that used a condom the last time they had intercourse	60%	63%
Taught about HIV/AIDS in school	85%	88%

References

Many references in this report are available on the World Wide Web. The Web has much information about adolescent health and the reader is encouraged to look further at references cited. Because Websites change from time to time, the date the Website was referenced is noted. Often the data available on a Website is updated regularly, giving the reader the most up-to-date information available.

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